

But I am 'jealous'? Indeed, ~~I~~ ^{is} am not of the Italian lady who would. I am sure, give me the right hand of friendship as a co-reformer; but it is for the children I am jealous; every modern educational movement tends to belittle them intellectually; & none more so than ^{this} ingenious attempt to feed normal children with the pap-meat which ~~may~~ ^{be} good for the mentally sick.

It was ably said the other day on a public occasion that education should profit by the divorce from psychology on the one hand & from sociology on the other which is now in progress; but what if education should use her ~~recovered~~ ^{recovered} liberty to make a monstrous alliance with pathology?

A friendly mention in a former number of the Supplement & the letters I have referred to urge upon me a rather distasteful task. It is time I shewed my hand and gave some account of work, the principles & practices of which should, I think, be of general use. Like those lepers who feasted at the gates of a famished city, I begin to take shame to myself?

I have attempted to unfold (in several volumes) a system of educational theory resting upon a physiological basis which seems to me ^{any} ~~able~~ to meet ~~every~~ rational demand. Some of it is

new, much of it is old. Like the quality of mercy, it is not strained; certainly it is twice blessed, it blesses him that gives & him that takes, & a sort of radiancy of look distinguished ~~both~~ both the scholar & the teacher engaged in this manner of education; but there are no startling results to challenge attention. Professor Bompas Smith remarked ^e ~~that other day~~, in that inaugural ^a ~~address~~ at the Manchester University ^d to which I have already referred, that, "If we can guide our practice by the light of a comprehensive theory we shall widen our experience by attempting tasks which would not otherwise have occurred to us".

I think that it is possible to offer the light of such a comprehensive theory, & the result is precisely what the Professor indicates. ~~A~~ a large number of teachers attempt tasks which would not otherwise have occurred to them.

One discovers a thing because it is there, & no sane person takes credit to himself for such discovery. On the contrary, he recognises with King Arthur that, "These jewels, whereupon I chanced Divinely, are for public use".

For many years I have had access to a sort of Aladdin's cave ^d which I long for throw open "for public use";

but being no more than an undistinguished Englishwoman who has

I have been thinking a great deal lately of the
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devoted forty years to the discovery & practice of a comprehensive theory of education. people do not perceive that I speak with authority; *it does not occur to them that the* They do not understand that the sole authority for educational as for poetical utterances lies in the fitness of the thing said. *It is a pity for were the splendid power & the noble zeal of the teaching profession, to-day engaged in working out a 'comprehensive theory', England should in a few years become a nation of intelligent patriots, public-spirited citizens, zealous of good works.* Some of the advantages of this method are, that, - It fits all ages, even the seven ages of man!

It satisfies brilliant children & discovers that the dull are intelligent. It secures attention, interest, concentration, without effort on the part of ~~the~~ teacher or taught.

Children, I think all children, so taught express themselves in forcible & fluent English & use a copious vocabulary.

Most children spell well. An unusual degree of nervous stability is attained; also, intellectual ~~good~~ occupation seems to make for chastity in thought & life. Parents become interested in the schoolroom work, & find the children 'delightful companions'.

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Children manifest delight in books (other than story books) & a genuine love of knowledge. Teachers are relieved from much of the labour of corrections. Children taught according to this method do exceptionally well in any school. It is unnecessary to stimulate these ~~these~~ young scholars by marks, prizes, honours lists, etc.

~~After all, it is not a quack medicine that I am writing about, though the reader might think so, & there is no is id a bottle in question!~~

Some thirty years ago I published a little book about the home education of children, & people wrote asking how those counsels of perfection could be carried out with the aid of the private governess as she then existed; it occurred to me that a series of curricula might be devised embodying sound principles & securing that children should be in a position of less dependence on their teacher than they then were; in other words that their education should be largely self-education. A sort of correspondence school was set up, the ~~new~~ motto of which, "I am, I can, I ought, I will," has had much effect in throwing children upon ^{the} latent ^{belonging to them as persons,} potentialities, present possibilities, incumbent duties & determining power implied in the personality of each.

"Children are born persons", is the first article of the educational credo in question. The response made by the children (ranging in age from six to eighteen) astonished me; ^{though} they ^{only} shewed the power of attention, the avidity for knowledge, the clearness of thought, the nice discrimination in books, & the power of dealing with many subjects, for which I had given them credit in advance.

I need not repeat what I have urged ^{elsewhere} on the subject of "Knowledge" in former letters to the Times; but ^{will only add that}

^{Any one can} the 'man in the street' can apply a test; let him read to a child of any age from six to ^{or} ten an account of ~~some~~ incident ~~in the Bal-~~ ^{in the} ~~kans, say,~~ graphically & tersely told, & the child will relate what he has heard point by point ~~that is~~ though not word for word,

& will add delightful original touches; what is more, he will ^{relate} read the passage months later because he has visualised the scene

& appropriated that bit of knowledge. A rhetorical passage, written in 'journalese' makes no impression on him; if the passage be read more than once, he becomes letter-perfect, but the spirit, the individuality has gone out of the exercise. An older boy

or girl will read one of Bacon's Essays, say, ^{or} a passage from De Quincey, ^{will} write or tell ^{it} very forcibly & with some style, either at

the moment or months later. We know how Coleridge recited a whole pamphlet of Burke's at a college supper though he had probably read it no more than once.

Here on the very surface is the ~~very~~ key to that attention, interest, literary, style, wide vocabulary, love of books, readiness in speaking, proper ~~to~~ to an education that is only begun at school & continued throughout life; ~~these~~ these are things that we all *desire, this is some part of the open secret which we are labouring to disclose, "for public use".* I say 'we' because there are many labourers at this work, & I should like to name one 'Interpreter' who entirely knows this comprehensive theory, which it is not easy to know because it embraces a great deal, & who is "utterly devoted to" what seems to us a great cause. Moreover at the House of the Interpreter, information may be had & illustrative matter may be seen*. *I need not say I suppose he can show me, after he has seen me.*

I am anxious to bring a quite successful educational experiment before the public at a moment when the Lord High Chancellor declares the urgent need of "making the subject of education interesting," a desire in which he is supported by the Primate, &

I am sure, by public opinion. Here is Education which is interesting

My dear Mr. Franklin
50 Porchester Terrace London W.

Fascinating

interesting, as a fine art, to parents, children & teachers.

During the last twenty years, thousands of children educated on these lines have grown up in love with knowledge & manifesting "a right

judgment in all things" so far as a pretty wide curriculum
gives them data. Children are at work in ~~many~~ ^{hundreds of} home schoolrooms,

in some forty boys' preparatory schools, girls' ~~schools~~ ^{schools} & classes;

they are taught by about ~~three~~ ² hundred trained ~~teachers~~ ¹ & ~~many~~ ^{Some hundreds of}

untrained teachers; the trained teachers have studied the principles & practices of this method for two years in a residential train-

ing College; The untrained teachers do good & conscientious

work, but only in so far as they ~~study~~ ^{know} the principles which under-

lie the work do they succeed, in turning out scholars, who ~~have~~ ^{have} become
more of persons by means of their studies.

It has been objected that this work is confined to

the children of the ~~well-to-do~~ ^{well-to-do} & educated classes,

a fact which is supposed to account for its success. But it will

be allowed that the average home-taught child does not disting-

uish himself when he goes to school; these children, however,

are remarked upon for ~~their~~ ^{their} power of attention & the wide

range of their knowledge.

I say 'knowledge' advisedly, bearing in mind a point I tried to

make in former letters to the Times, - namely, that information does not become knowledge until it has been acted upon by the mind of the recipient.

It is of necessity & not of choice that our efforts are confined to the children ^u of the ^e Upper Classes; the girls of this class, & the young boys are practically the only children available for such an educational experiment, ^{an} This experiment ~~is~~ founded on long study, not of the 'child mind' - ^u there is ~~no~~ such thing, - "Love has no nonage nor the mind," is, like all ~~fine~~ fine poetry, true in fact, ^{but} ~~none~~ of the behaviour of the mind with regard to knowledge. If we should be allowed hereafter to do these good works which we ardently desire but get no opportunity to accomplish here, I hope to find myself ^{in some invisible way,} ~~at the head~~ ^{at the head} of a large elementary school ^{helping to control a} in which the children are students, each engaged with his own copy of the book in use, the teacher ^{guiding,} reading with his class as a college tutor reads with men; ~~at the head, too,~~ ^{of a big Girls' High School,} working under the same conditions; & may I whisper it, ~~at the head of one of the great Public Schools,~~ ^{more} where much more & various reading should be accomplished than seems possible at present.

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Reading! Reading! Why this emphasis on reading in an age when,

"Things are in the ~~m~~iddle, & ride mankind"? Because it is just here that much educational work fails; there are a few girls or boys of fine intelligence in every school; these read, both during school life & afterwards; but nine-tenths of the scholars in most schools enter on adult life without ~~being~~ having formed the reading habit. I would have children taught to read before they learn the mechanical art of reading; & they learn delightfully; they give perfect attention to a paragraph or a page which is read to them, & are able to relate the matter, point by point, in their own words; but they ~~demand~~ demand classical English & cannot learn to read in this sense upon anything ^{less} else. They begin their 'schooling' in letters at six, & begin at the same time to learn the mechanical arts of reading & writing. A child does not lose by spending a couple of years in acquiring these because he is meanwhile 'reading' the Bible, history, Geography, tales, with close attention & a remarkable power of reproduction, or rather, of translation into his own language; he is acquiring a copious vocabulary, & the habit of consecutive speech. In a word, he is an educated child from the first, & his power of dealing with books, with several books in the course of a morning's 'school', increases with his age.

24/11/1954

But children are not all alike; there is as much difference between them as between ^{c or e} ~~man~~ & ~~woman~~; only yesterday a small boy, not quite six, came to school, (by post); & his record was, that he could read anything in ~~five~~ ^{the other languages} five languages, & was now teaching himself the Greek characters, could find his way about the continental Bradshaw, & was a chubby, vigorous little person. All this ^{the} boy ~~bring~~ brings with him when he comes to school, ^{he} is exceptional; of course, just as a man with such accomplishments is exceptional; but I believe that all children bring with them much capacity which is not recognised by their teachers, chiefly, intellectual capacity, (always in advance of motor power), which we are apt to drown in deluges of explanation, or dissipate in futile labours of ^{the} ~~the treadmill order.~~

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The world is divided into persons who read & think & persons who do not read & think; & the business of schools is to see that all their scholars shall belong to the former class; ^{it is worth while to remember that} thinking is inseparable from the reading which is concerned with the content of a passage & not merely with ^{the} ~~its~~ printed character.

The children I am speaking of are much occupied with things as well as with books, because 'Education is the Science of Relations' is

the principle which regulates their curriculum; that is, that a child goes to school with many ~~capacities~~ ^{which} aptitudes, he should put into effect; ~~so~~ he learns a good deal of science, because children have no difficulty in understanding principles, though technical details baffle them. He does various handicrafts that he may know the feel of wood, clay, leather, & the joy of handling tools, that is, that he may establish a due relation with materials. But, always, it is the book, the knowledge, the clay, the bird or blossom, he thinks of, not his own place or his own progress.

I am afraid that some knowledge of the theory we advance is necessary to the open-minded teacher who would give our practices a ~~xx~~ trial, because every detail of school-room work is the outcome of ^{certain} ~~a~~ principles. For instance, it would be quite easy without much thought to experiment with our use of books, but in education as in religion it is the motive that counts, & the boy who reads his lesson for a 'good mark' becomes letter-perfect but does not know.

^{These} But ~~our~~ principles are obvious & simple enough, & when we consider that education is chaotic for want of a unifying theory, & that ~~there is no other comprehension which is in line with modern thought & fits every occasion~~ ^{we have} ~~and~~

happens to be

that there ~~is~~ ^{is} no other comprehensive theory in the field which is in line with modern thought & fits every occasion, might it not be well to try one which is immediately practicable & always pleasant & has proved itself by producing many capable, serviceable, dutiful men & women of sound judgment & willing mind?

In urging a method of self-education for children in lieu of the vicarious education which prevails, I should like to dwell on the enormous relief to teachers, a ~~such~~ self-sacrificing & greatly overburdened class of the community; it is just *is just that* the difference between driving a horse, & a horse heavy in hand; the former covers the ground of his own gay will & the driver guides *goes* ~~he enjoys the motion.~~ *merrily.* The teacher ~~should be~~ *who always has his scholars in the way of good* the guide, philosopher & friend of his scholars ~~never the agent of forced intellectual feeding.~~ *not the mere instrument of forcible*